



# SPAWN®

image

243

DIGITAL  
EDITION

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fco





## PREVIOUSLY IN SPAWN

Redeemer demolishes every Old Guard member in his path, leaving no survivors. Although Solomon's group could have assisted, they stood idly by, watching the blood bath unfold. They have an agenda of their own...

Upstairs, Bludd continues plotting his revenge on God, and decides to sever ties with Clown.

After several attempts to get Jim to communicate clearer, Sara tries once more. She recalls a time Jim saved her from the paparazzi, taking her through the darkness—the darkness that hasn't left her since. As Jim tries to console her, Sara has a disturbing vision, and abruptly rushes out on Jim. Unfortunately for Sara, there are greater dangers waiting for her outside the apartment.



**Jim Downing (Spawn)** – A man whose past is shrouded in mystery, and connected intimately to the very fabric of the Spawn mythos, Jim is the world's newest Hellspawn...and so much more. Having spent years in a deep coma, Jim's main drive is piecing together the fragments of the man he was, in an effort to discover the man he truly is.



**Sara Johnston** – When Jim woke from his coma (issue #185), Sara was the first person to greet him on the other side of the darkness. A woman of strong faith, Sara's connection to Jim will test her in ways she could never imagine.



**Redeemer** – A chosen one transformed and subcontracted by Heaven to redeem or destroy Spawns on Earth. Many have worn the uniform, but few have been able to truly harness the power within it. The current Redeemer appears to have full control of the uniform, but redeeming and destroying Spawns doesn't seem to be his mission.



**Bludd** – An old and powerful vampire leader, the true depths of Bludd's history are as yet unknown. In his human guise as the international mogul, Mr. Ramus, Bludd has amassed great wealth and influence. His desire to control Jim Downing and the powers of the costume is no secret, and has led to an uneasy partnership between Bludd and Jim – a partnership that is mutually beneficial, and, quite possibly, mutually destructive.



**Solomon Pure** – The brother of Simon Pure, and leader of a like-minded group of vampires. Solomon makes a deal with Bludd to join forces and merge their armies. However, Solomon has a different end goal than his new partner.



**Clown** – A demon with close ties to the legacy of the Hellspawn, Clown's goal of controlling Jim Downing has continuously been jeopardized. But, ever the survivor, Clown seeks new avenues through which to manipulate his prize – Downing will not slip through his grasp so easily.



**Dead Zone** – A celestial safe zone, which neutralizes both agents of Heaven and Hell's powers. Several Dead Zones exist, though few have been revealed. These portals allow Heaven and Hell to place each other's pieces (agents) on the board (Earth), but they're full origin story may alter the game in a way no one's imagined.

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tek tek tek



C'MON.  
PICK  
UP.

MARC...  
YOU HEARD  
FROM SARA  
TODAY?

HAVE  
YOU BEEN  
TRYING?

NOPE.

WELL I HAVE--  
AND SHE HASN'T  
BEEN ANSWERING.  
SHE WAS SUPPOSED  
TO CALL ME YESTER-  
DAY, BUT SHE'S LEFT  
NO MESSAGES AND  
SHE'S NOT PICKING  
UP. THOUGHT YOU  
MIGHT HAVE HEARD  
FROM HER. SHE  
WAS PRETTY  
UPSET WHEN  
SHE LEFT.\*

NOPE.

THERE'S A  
SURPRISE.

WHAT?  
YOU'RE NOT  
STILL ANGRY  
OVER THE *OTHER*  
NIGHT? I TOLD  
YOU I WAS  
SORRY. SO QUIT  
WITH THE SILENT  
TREATMENT  
ALREADY.

AND  
STOP MAKING  
THAT SILLY FACE.  
I GET THAT YOU'RE  
MAD AT ME. WHAT  
MORE DO YOU  
WANT ME TO  
SAY?

NOTHING.  
YOU DO YOUR  
JOB. I'LL DO  
MINE.

ALRIGHT,  
GENTLEMEN, I'LL  
NEED MR. DOWNING  
OUT ON STAGE IN  
ABOUT TWO  
MINUTES.





LOOK, MARC,  
I GET IT. YOU THINK  
I WAS BEING ROUGH  
ON SUSAN AND I  
PROBABLY WAS, BUT I  
JUST WASN'T IN THE  
MOOD FOR WHATEVER  
IT WAS YOU GUYS  
WERE TRYING  
TO DO.

WE WERE TRYING  
TO HELP YOU, JIM.  
DON'T YOU GET THAT? ALL  
OF US ARE BUSTING OUR BALLS  
AROUND HERE SO YOU CAN  
DO WHAT YOU NEED TO, TO  
MAKE THE FOUNDATION WORK.  
BUT WHEN YOU DISAPPEAR  
OR AVOID US-- IT MAKES  
ALL OF OUR JOBS  
DIFFICULT.

SO, YOU TELL  
ME-- HOW SHOULD I  
BE FEELING? YOU INSULT  
MY GIRLFRIEND, YOU DON'T  
LET ME IN ON WHATEVER  
SECRETS YOU'RE CHASING  
AND, WHETHER YOU WANT  
TO ADMIT IT OR NOT,  
YOU'RE PUTTING US ALL  
IN DANGER.

WHAT'RE  
YOU TALKING  
ABOUT?



JESUS CHRIST!  
WAKE UP! SOMEONE  
TRIED TO SHOOT YOU...  
REMEMBER? PLUS THE MEDIA'S  
ALWAYS HOUNDING YOU AND  
THE GOVERNMENT'S ON YOUR  
CASE. THAT PUTS WHOEVER'S  
NEAR YOU IN THE LINE  
OF FIRE TOO!

THE  
GOVERN-  
MENT?

WHAT? YOU  
THOUGHT THEY WERE  
JUST GOING TO LET SOME  
UNIDENTIFIED STRANGER,  
WHO SEEMS IMPERVIOUS TO  
BULLETS AND HEALS DYING  
PEOPLE, JUST WALTZ  
AROUND DOING WHAT-  
EVER HE WANTED?

SURELY  
YOU' RE  
NOT THAT  
STUPID?

LOOK,  
MARC, I'LL  
TAKE CARE OF  
THINGS. I  
PROMISE.



ARE YOU  
KIDDING ME?  
HOW THE HELL  
CAN YOU FIX THINGS  
WHEN YOU HAVEN'T  
A CLUE WHO'S  
WATCHING YOU?!  
OR WHY?

SO BESIDES  
YOUR ODD BEHAVIOR,  
I HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE  
FEDS ASKING QUESTIONS  
AND... MAKE IT APPEAR TO  
YOUR ADORING PUBLIC THAT  
EVERYTHING'S NORMAL  
IN YOUR LIFE.

OTHER  
THAN YOUR  
SUPER POWERS  
AND YOUR  
DISAPPEARING  
ACTS!





I HAD  
NO  
IDEA.

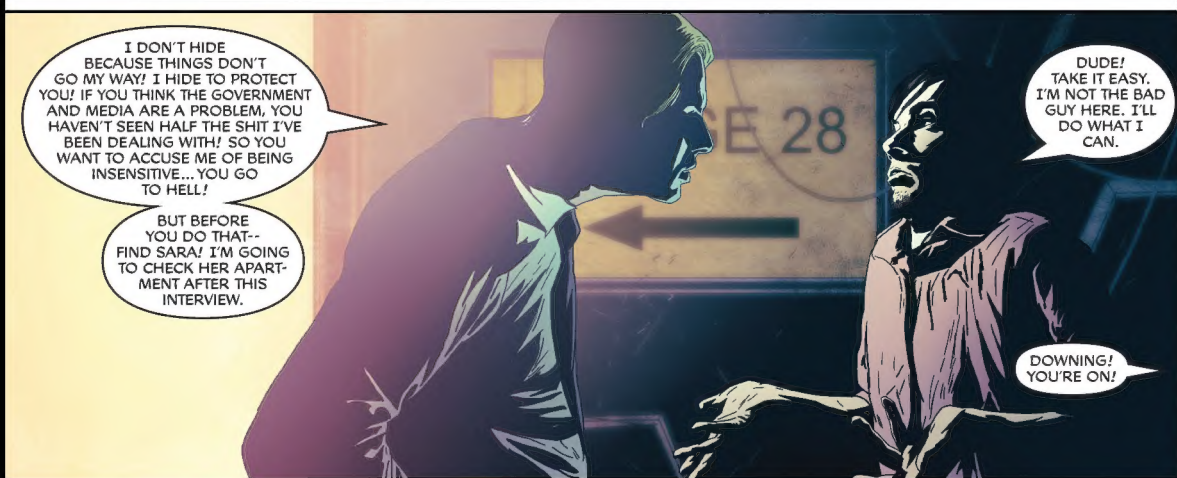
BECAUSE  
YOU NEVER  
ASKED!



SO, I'LL TRY  
AND RUN DOWN  
SARA FOR YOU. BUT  
EVEN IF I DO FIND HER,  
I CAN'T GUARANTEE  
SHE'LL EVEN WANT TO  
TALK TO YOU.

I DON'T  
CARE IF SHE  
TALKS. I JUST  
WANT TO KNOW  
WHERE SHE IS.  
THAT SHE'S  
SAFE.

I'M SURE,  
BUT SHE'S A  
LOT LIKE YOU--  
WANTS TO HIDE  
AWAY WHEN  
THINGS AREN'T  
GOING HER  
WAY.

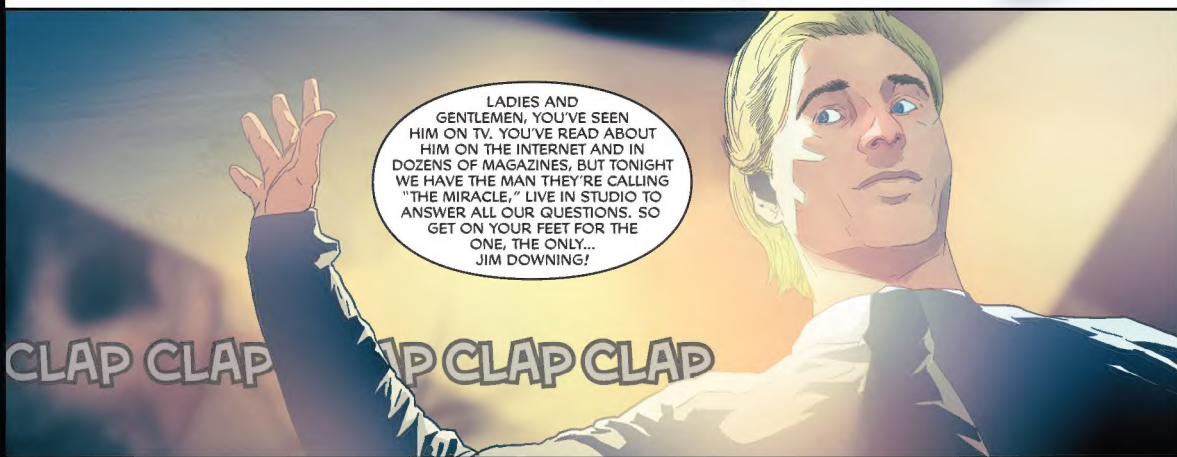


I DON'T HIDE  
BECAUSE THINGS DON'T  
GO MY WAY! I HIDE TO PROTECT  
YOU! IF YOU THINK THE GOVERNMENT  
AND MEDIA ARE A PROBLEM, YOU  
HAVEN'T SEEN HALF THE SHIT I'VE  
BEEN DEALING WITH! SO YOU  
WANT TO ACCUSE ME OF BEING  
INSENSITIVE... YOU GO  
TO HELL!

BUT BEFORE  
YOU DO THAT--  
FIND SARA! I'M GOING  
TO CHECK HER APART-  
MENT AFTER THIS  
INTERVIEW.

DUDE!  
TAKE IT EASY.  
I'M NOT THE BAD  
GUY HERE. I'LL  
DO WHAT I  
CAN.

DOWNING!  
YOU'RE ON!



LADIES AND  
GENTLEMEN, YOU'VE SEEN  
HIM ON TV. YOU'VE READ ABOUT  
HIM ON THE INTERNET AND IN  
DOZENS OF MAGAZINES, BUT TONIGHT  
WE HAVE THE MAN THEY'RE CALLING  
"THE MIRACLE," LIVE IN STUDIO  
TO ANSWER ALL OUR QUESTIONS. SO  
GET ON YOUR FEET FOR THE  
ONE, THE ONLY...  
JIM DOWNING!

CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP





HEY, LOU.  
I WANTED TO ASK  
YOU A QUESTION  
ABOUT THE OTHER  
NIGHT. YOU  
WORKED TUESDAY,  
RIGHT?

UNTIL  
ABOUT  
THREE IN THE  
MORNING.

I  
WANTED  
TO KNOW  
WHAT KIND OF  
MOOD SARA  
WAS IN  
WHEN SHE  
LEFT.

YOU  
MEAN  
AFTER  
SHE CAME  
TO VISIT  
YOU?

YEAH.

I NEVER  
SAW HER. I  
JUST ASSUMED  
SHE SPENT THE  
NIGHT WITH  
YOU, SIR. MAYBE  
THE MORNING  
SHIFT SAW...

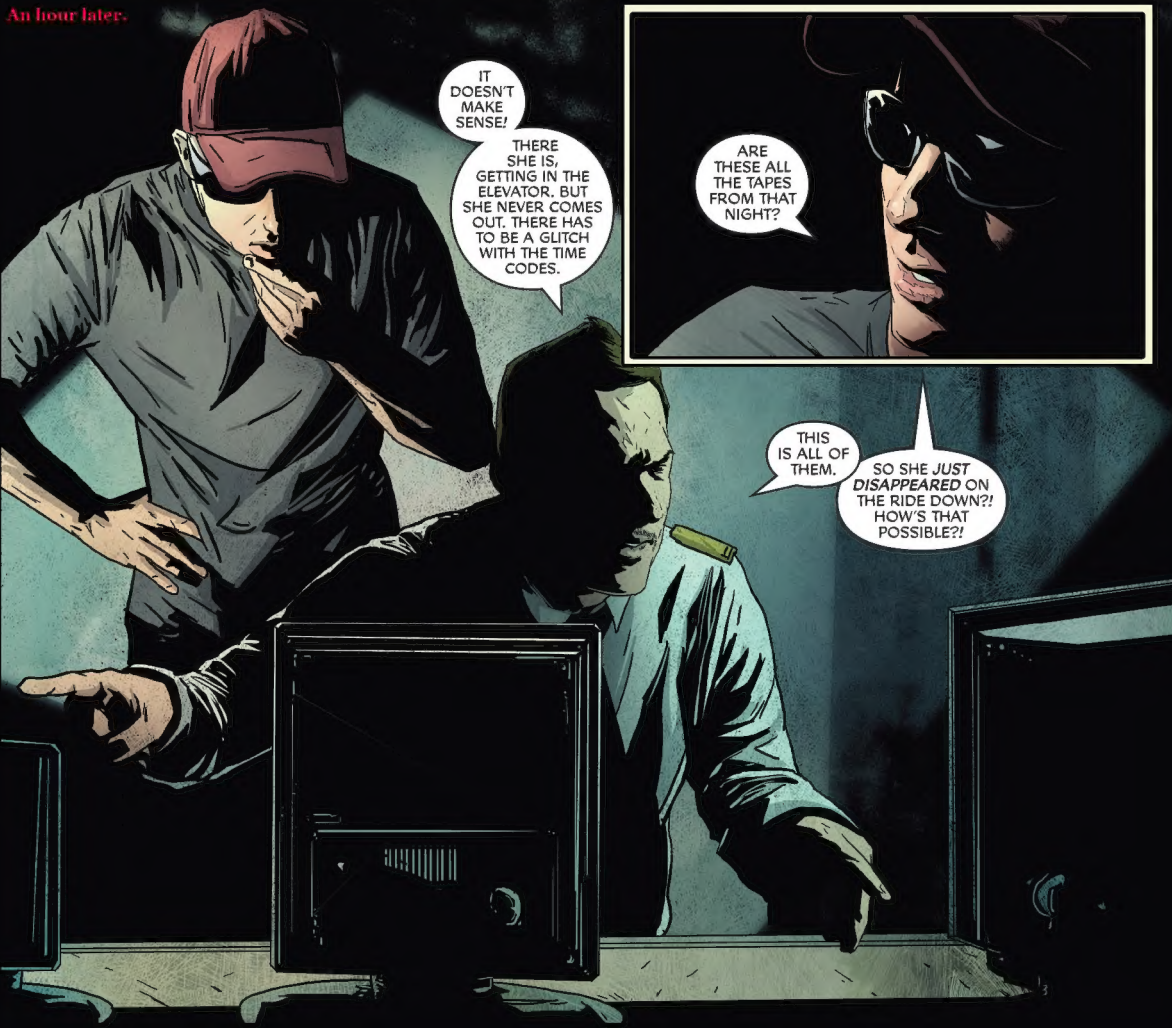


NO!  
SHE LEFT  
AT NIGHT,  
AROUND  
10:30 OR  
SO.

I'M SORRY--  
I DIDN'T SEE  
HER, AND I PAY  
ATTENTION BECAUSE  
THOSE DAMN  
PHOTOGRAPHERS  
ARE ALWAYS  
HANGING OUT AND  
I KNOW HOW YOU  
FEEL ABOUT  
THEM.

I CAN CHECK  
THE SECURITY  
TAPES IF YOU WANT.  
THE CAMERAS  
WOULD SHOW  
SOMETHING.

An hour later.



IT  
DOESN'T  
MAKE  
SENSE!

THERE  
SHE IS,  
GETTING IN THE  
ELEVATOR. BUT  
SHE NEVER COMES  
OUT. THERE HAS  
TO BE A GLITCH  
WITH THE TIME  
CODES.

ARE  
THESE ALL  
THE TAPES  
FROM THAT  
NIGHT?

THIS  
IS ALL OF  
THEM.

SO SHE JUST  
DISAPPEARED ON  
THE RIDE DOWN?!  
HOW'S THAT  
POSSIBLE?!





I'M GLAD YOU'RE STARTING TO FEEL BETTER. THE DOCTORS SAY YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO RETURN TO WORK SOON.

EVERYONE'S MISSING YOU.

EVERYONE? EVEN THAT PECKERHEAD, ZARRINO?



WELL, NOT HIM... BUT MOST EVERYONE ELSE.

YOU'D BE SURPRISED AT HOW COPS CARE ABOUT EACH OTHER WHEN ONE OF THEM NEARLY DIES.

GOOD. I PLAN ON MILKING THAT FOR A WHILE.

IN THE MEANTIME-- HOW'S YOUR WORKLOAD GOING? MAKING ANY PROGRESS WITH IT? I HEARD YOU'RE STILL KNEE DEEP IN YOUR DOWNING INVESTIGATION.



I AM. BEFORE WE GET INTO THAT, THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT.

SOUNDS SERIOUS.



IT IS.

THE REASON YOU WERE IN THE HOSPITAL-- YOUR HEART ATTACK-- WAS BECAUSE OF ME.



AND NOW THAT YOU'RE HEALTHY, YOU DESERVE TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU.





I'M SORRY, SAM.  
NONE OF THIS SHOULD  
HAVE HAPPENED. I SHOULDN'T  
HAVE AGGRAVATED CLOWN LIKE  
THAT.\* WE KNOW WHAT THEY'RE  
CAPABLE OF DOING. WE'VE  
SEEN IT DOZENS OF TIMES  
ALREADY, BUT..

BUT THEY'VE  
GENERALLY KEPT THEIR  
FIGHTING AMONGST  
THEMSELVES. SPAWN,  
CLOWN, AND ALL THE REST  
OF THOSE  
DEMON SHITS!

GUESS  
WE'VE BEEN  
LUCKY THEY'VE  
LEFT US ALONE  
FOR THIS  
LONG.

HE COULD  
HAVE KILLED YOU, SAM.  
THAT'S WHAT SCARES ME.  
WE'RE COMPLETELY OUT OF  
OUR LEAGUE HERE. WITHOUT  
AL, I DON'T KNOW IF THERE'S  
ANYONE WE CAN  
TRUST.

\*Issue 199 -- Todd



I THOUGHT  
YOU SAID  
DOWNING  
TRIED TO HELP  
ME.

HE DID.  
BUT I WAS USING  
HIM FOR WHAT HIS  
POWERS CAN DO-- NOT  
BECAUSE I TRUST HIM.  
MAYBE IN TIME, NOT  
NOW, THOUGH.

SO WE'RE ON  
OUR OWN. WOULDN'T  
BE THE FIRST TIME. AND  
JUST SO YOU KNOW-- YOU  
DID NOTHING WRONG. IN  
FACT, I'M KINDA PROUD YOU  
STOOD UP FOR ME AGAINST  
CLOWN AND PROTECTED  
ME AT THE HOSPITAL.  
YOUR BEING THERE  
DID MATTER.





THANKS,  
SAM. THAT  
MEANS  
A LOT.



BUT IT'S  
GETTING LATE AND THE  
DOCTORS SAID YOU NEEDED  
YOUR SLEEP. WE CAN PICK  
THIS UP IN THE MORNING. I'LL  
COME BY AROUND NINE.  
MAKE SURE YOU TAKE  
YOUR MEDICINE.

SEE...  
I KIND OF  
LIKE HAVING  
YOU AS A  
PARTNER.

AW, CHRIST--  
YOU'RE MAKING  
ME BLUSH.  
NOW GET OUT  
OF HERE.



EVENING,  
TWITCH.

WHA...?



I TOLD  
YOU... STAY  
AWAY FROM  
ME.\*





I NEED YOUR HELP.

I'M OFF DUTY. TAKE YOUR GRIEVANCE UP WITH SOMEONE ELSE.



LOOK... YOU WANT TO BE MAD AT ME, TWITCH, GO AHEAD! BUT YOU CAME TO ME FIRST! I TRIED HELPING SAM WHEN YOU WANTED, NOW I WANT YOU TO RETURN THE FAVOR. SARA'S MISSING. DISAPPEARED. NO ONE KNOWS WHERE SHE IS.

YOU TRAVEL IN THE SHADOWS. WHY DON'T YOU JUST CHECK HER APARTMENT?

I DID. IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE SHE'S BEEN THERE.



HOW LONG HAS SHE BEEN GONE?

SINCE LAST NIGHT, MAYBE.

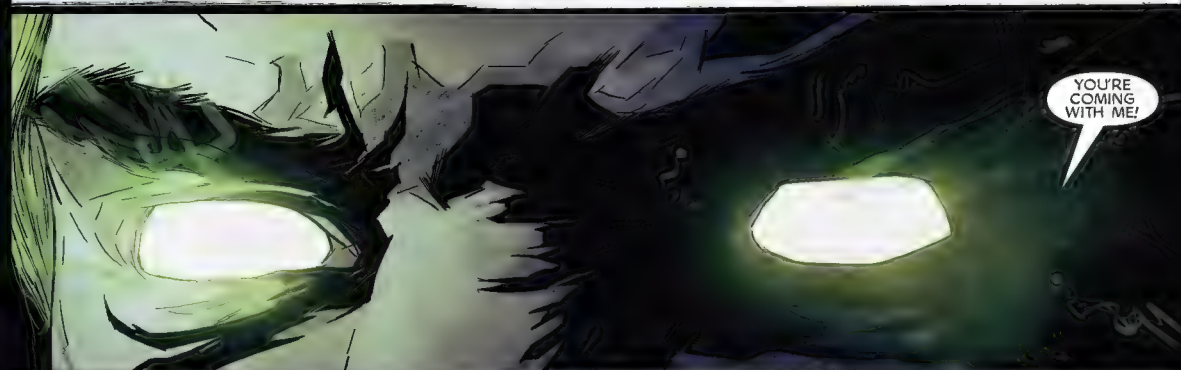
SO WHAT DO YOU NEED FROM ME?




I'M NOT A DETECTIVE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT CLUES TO LOOK FOR-- THAT'S YOUR SKILL. I WANT TO MAKE SURE I'M NOT MISSING SOMETHING.

IF IT HASN'T BEEN A FULL 48 HOURS, WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING. IT'S NOT A MISSING PERSONS CASE YET. A WARRANT WOULD TAKE TOO LONG TO...










THIS IS  
HER PLACE. TAKE  
A LOOK AROUND AND  
TELL ME HOW LONG IT'S  
BEEN SINCE SHE'S BEEN  
HERE. OR IF ANYTHING  
STRIKES YOU  
AS ODD.

YOU'RE...  
THIS ISN'T  
HOW I DO  
THINGS.



WHY ARE YOU  
FIGHTING ME? BECAUSE  
I MET YOUR DEAD SON?  
I DON'T KNOW HOW THAT  
HAPPENED. I JUST WANT TO  
MAKE SURE SARA'S SAFE.  
JUST LIKE YOU WANT  
SAM SAFE.

WHAT'RE  
YOU TALKING  
ABOUT?

I HEARD  
WHAT YOU SAID  
TO HIM. I WAS IN  
THE ROOM THE  
WHOLE TIME.



YOU  
WHAT?

YOU INVADE  
PEOPLE'S LIVES WHEN-  
EVER YOU WANT? FORCE  
THEM AGAINST THEIR WILLS  
TO HELP?! THAT'S WHAT  
YOU DO? THAT'S HOW  
YOU USE YOUR  
POWERS?

I PROTECT  
MY FRIENDS. AND I'LL  
DO WHATEVER IT  
TAKES TO KEEP THEM  
PROTECTED.



ANY FURTHER  
QUESTIONS ABOUT  
OUR INDOONESIAN  
MERGER BEFORE  
WE MOVE ON?

NO?

GOOD! ALRIGHT,  
THE NEXT ITEM ON OUR  
AGENDA IS ABOUT OUR  
ONGOING TALKS WITH THE SYRIAN  
GOVERNMENT ABOUT OUR  
DRILLING FACILITIES IN THE NORTH.  
WE'RE TRYING TO SEE WHAT SECURITY  
ASSURANCES THEY CAN GIVE US  
DURING THEIR ONGOING BATTLES  
WITH THEIR POPULACE.  
MR. RAMUS WILL ELABORATE  
FURTHER.



THANK YOU,  
DONALD. AS YOU  
GENTLEMEN ARE AWARE,  
OUR FISCAL QUARTER WILL BE  
ENDING NEXT WEEK AND THE  
PRODUCTION OF THESE PETROLEUM  
SITES IS ESSENTIAL TO OUR  
BOTTOM LINE. HAVING CONTINUED  
DISTRIBUTION OF THOSE OIL  
SUPPLIES WILL FURTHER  
STRENGTHEN...

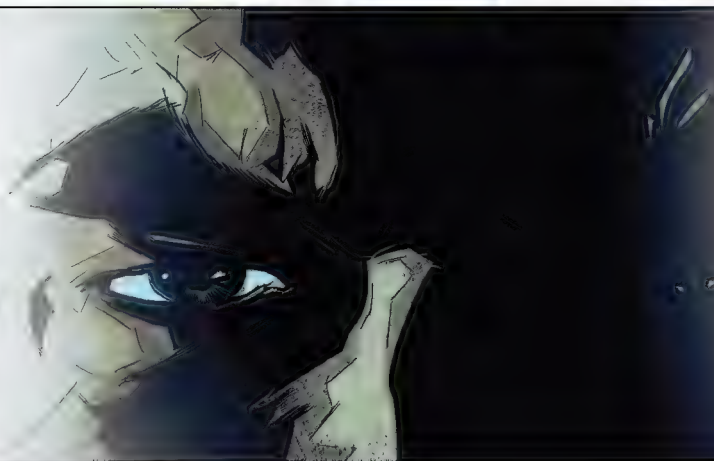
**SLAM**

HEY!  
SORRY FOR THE  
INTRUSION, EVERYONE,  
BUT MR. RAMUS SAID HIS  
BOARD WAS MEETING TODAY  
AND WAS HOPING I'D  
HAVE A CHANCE TO POP  
IN. HOPE I'M NOT  
INTERRUPTING SOME-  
THING BIG?



PLEASE,  
MR. DOWNING...  
COME IN.

I DIDN'T  
THINK YOU'D  
BE COMING  
TODAY.











WHAT'S THIS ABOUT, DOWNING? I DIDN'T INVITE YOU HERE TODAY.



LET'S CUT THE CRAP! WHERE'S SARA?

WHO'S SARA?

DON'T TEST ME!



THEN WHAT DO YOU WANT?



SHE'S MISSING! I SCoured HER APARTMENT AND SHE HASN'T BEEN THERE... AND NOTHING'S BEEN TOUCHED. SO THAT ONLY LEAVES ME WITH A COUPLE POSSIBILITIES. YOU'RE ONE OF THEM! NOW TALK!

WELL... I'M FLATTERED YOU THINK SO HIGHLY OF ME, BUT I DON'T NEED TO ABUSE YOUR HUMAN FRIENDS TO MAKE YOU DO WHAT I WANT. THOUGH, SEEING AS HOW MUCH YOU CARE FOR THIS LADY, I MAY CHANGE MY MIND IN THE FUTURE.

YOU'RE LYING!



LET'S GET SOMETHING STRAIGHT, JIM.



IF I WANTED TO SEND YOU A MESSAGE THROUGH YOUR FRIENDS, THEY'D ALL BE DEAD. ALL OF THEM! I WOULDN'T STOP WITH JUST ONE.





YOU THINK YOU CONTROL ME? IT'S THE OTHER WAY AROUND.

I SAW HOW YOU REACTED WHEN I CRASHED YOUR MEETING. YOU DON'T LIKE IT WHEN YOU'RE NOT IN CHARGE. WHEN THINGS AREN'T GOING YOUR WAY, THAT'S GOOD BECAUSE I PLAN ON USING THAT AGAINST YOU SOON. IN THE MEANTIME, I'M LOOKING FOR SARA.

AND IF I DON'T GET A FEW ANSWERS SOON, I'LL MAKE SURE ALL THOSE MEN OUT THERE SUFFER-- AND I'LL MAKE SURE THEY THINK YOU SENT ME. THAT WOULDN'T BE GOOD FOR YOUR BUSINESS, NOW WOULD IT?



TRY CLOWN.

HE'S MY NEXT STOP. WHERE DOES HE GO AT NIGHT?



THAT'S ALWAYS BEEN A MYSTERY. BUT HE DOES POP OUT OF HIS HOLE FROM TIME TO TIME. THERE'S AN INSANE ASYLUM HE LIKES TO FREQUENT.



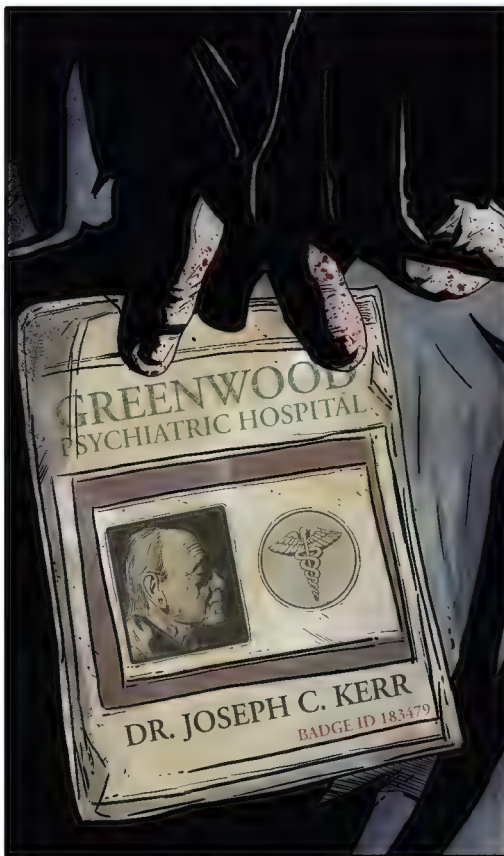
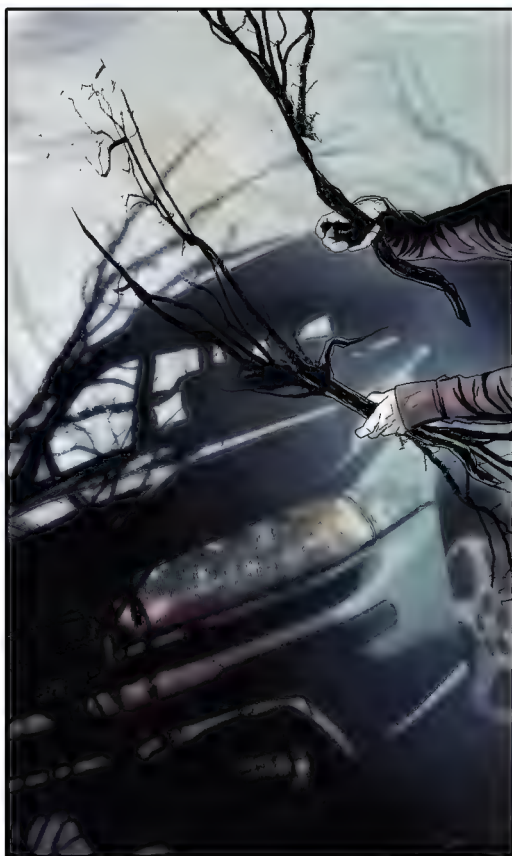
SO HE HANGS OUT WITH THE OTHER CRAZIES IN THEIR PADDED CELLS?

NOT QUITE. HE'S A DOCTOR THERE.

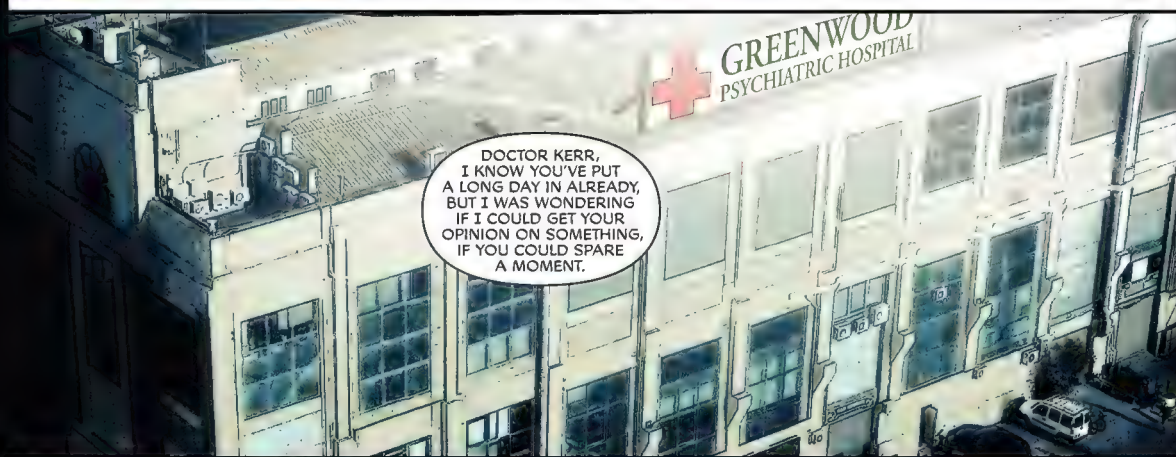
DOES THIS PLACE HAVE A NAME?



Northern Connecticut.







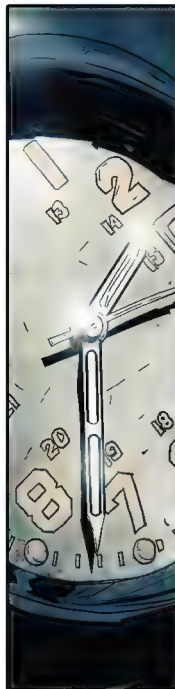
DOCTOR KERR,  
I KNOW YOU'VE PUT  
A LONG DAY IN ALREADY,  
BUT I WAS WONDERING  
IF I COULD GET YOUR  
OPINION ON SOMETHING,  
IF YOU COULD SPARE  
A MOMENT.



I'M  
QUITE  
BUSY.

I UNDER-  
STAND, BUT I  
JUST NEED A BIT  
OF YOUR TIME.  
IT'S CONCERNING  
A YOUNG  
WOMAN.

OKAY.  
I CAN GIVE  
YOU FIVE  
MINUTES.



THANK  
YOU SO  
MUCH. THAT'S  
ALL THE TIME  
I'LL NEED.



IN HERE.  
PLEASE.





**KRASH**

TELL ME!  
**WHERE IS  
SHE?!**

HOW...?

YOU'RE  
NOT THE  
ONLY ONE  
THAT CAN  
CHANGE HIS  
LOOKS!



**BAM**

NOW...  
**WHERE'S  
SARA?!**

SHE'S  
DEAD!



OR  
MAYBE  
NOT.

I'M NOT  
TELLING.

KNOW  
WHY?

BECAUSE  
YOU NEVER  
HAD THE POWER  
TO STOP ANY-  
THING I  
WANTED TO  
DO.

**EVER!**

I DON'T  
NEED POWER TO  
BEAT YOU. I JUST  
NEED YOU... TO  
**NOT**  
HAVE  
POWERS!

SO, I'VE  
GOT SOMETHING  
FOR YOU!





AND GUESS WHERE IT CAME FROM?

THE 'DEAD ZONE'!

MEANING THIS DIRT NEUTRALIZES ANYTHING IT TOUCHES. TURNS THINGS HUMAN...

EVEN YOU!

YOU'VE GONE MAD!!

OH, I'M MAD ALL RIGHT! IN FACT I'M PISSED OFF!

slit

slit

YEAAAAAAA

SO UNLESS YOU WANT ME TO COMPLETELY CARVE YOUR FACE OFF-- YOU'LL TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED TO SARA!

IF NOT-- I'LL KILL YOU RIGHT HERE!

OKAY.







Tyrant  
Lizard  
King

EMPIRE